

REMARKS

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the pending application. The Office Action dated May 11, 2010 has been received and its contents carefully reviewed.

Claims 10-22 and 29 are hereby amended. No claims are canceled. No claims are added. Accordingly, claims 1-29 are currently pending, of these claims 1-9 and 23-28 are withdrawn from consideration. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested.

The Office objects to the Specification. The Office objects to the length of the abstract. *Office Action* at p. 2, ¶ 2. Applicants submit herewith a replacement abstract, which Applicants believe meets the requirements expressed in MPEP § 608.01(b). Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the Office to withdraw the objection to the abstract.

The Office objects to Figures 1-3. A replacement sheet, containing figures 1, 2 and 3, was required by the Office. *Office Action* at p. 2, ¶ 3. Accordingly, an appropriately labeled replacement sheet is attached hereto. FIGS. 1, 2 and 3, on the replacement sheet, are designated with the legend --RELATED ART--. Furthermore, this page is labeled --REPLACEMENT SHEET--. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the Office to withdraw its objection to FIGS. 1, 2 and 3.

In the Office Action claims 11 and 12 are objected to for informalities noted therein. *Office Action* at p. 2 ¶ 4. Applicants have amended claims 11 and 12 accordingly and request that the Office withdraw the objection.

Claims 14 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicants regard as the invention. *Office Action* at p. 3, ¶ 6. Applicants have amended claims 14 and 22 and request that the Office withdraw the 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph rejection of claims 14 and 22.

Claims 10-12, 14-22, and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Publication No. 2002/0133886 to Severns et al. (hereinafter “Severns”). *Office Action* at p. 4, ¶ 11. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection and request reconsideration.

Independent claim 10 is allowable over *Severns* in that claim 10 recites a combination of elements including, for example, “supplying steam to an inside of a drum where the laundry is introduced to soak the laundry and contaminants of the laundry; stopping steam supply after a predetermined period of time; and rotating the drum at a high speed to separate centrifugally the contaminants soaked with the steam from the laundry.” *Severns* does not teach or suggest, at least, these features of claim 10.

The Office asserts that “one with ordinary skill in the art would know that the method taught by *Severns* would result in the laundry being soaked by steam when applied for a predetermined time.” *Office Action* at p. 5, ¶ 15. Applicants respectfully disagree. *Severns* discloses that “air is introduced to the fabric ... to complete the drying of garments without the need for an additional or separate drying apparatus” and “[a]lternatively, a gas such as nitrogen may be used in place of air, or gases such as steam, ozone could be added to the air.” *Severns* at ¶ [0137]. In other words, *Severns* discloses supplying steam to the laundry to dry the lipophilic cleaning fluid (LCF). The purpose, temperature and pressure of supplying steam as disclosed by *Severns* is different from that of the present invention. *Severns* uses steam for drying to remove LCP and the moisture contained in water. The present invention supplies “steam ... to soak the laundry and contaminants of the laundry.” Therefore, it would not lead one of ordinary skill in the art to the conclusion stated by the Office.

Further, claim 10 recites “rotating the drum at a high speed to separate centrifugally the contaminants soaked with the steam from the laundry.” *Severns* discloses “high centrifugal acceleration removal of the lipophilic cleaning fluid and soil from the fabric articles.” *Severns* at ¶ [0137]. Thus, *Severns* discloses high speed rotation of the drum after adding the LCF not after providing steam for soaking. In other words, the present invention centrifugally separates steam soaked contaminants whereas *Severns* centrifugally separates LCF. Accordingly, *Severns* does not teach or suggest, “supplying steam to an inside of a drum where the laundry is introduced to soak the laundry and contaminants of the laundry; stopping steam supply after a predetermined period of time; and rotating the drum at a high speed to separate centrifugally the contaminants soaked with the steam from the laundry,” as recited in independent claim 10.

For at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully request that the Office withdraw the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of independent claim 10. Claims 11, 12, 14-22, and 29 depend from

independent claim 10. It stands to reason that the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of those dependent claims should be withdrawn as well.

Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Severns* and further in view of U.S. Publication No. 2005/0000033 to Park et al. (hereinafter “*Park*”). *Office Action* at p. 5, ¶ 26. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection and request reconsideration.

Park fails to cure the deficiencies of *Severns* with respect to independent claim 10. Indeed, the Office only relied upon *Park* to purportedly disclose “rotating the drum at a speed of 1000 - 3000 RPM to disperse air throughout the drum.” *Office Action* at p. 7. Because none of the cited references, either individually or in combination, teaches or suggests each and every element of independent claim 10, they also fail to teach or suggest each and every element of claim 13, which depends from claim 10. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the Office to withdraw the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of claim 13.

CONCLUSION

The application is in condition for allowance. Early and favorable action is respectfully solicited.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at (202) 496-7500 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the

filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0911.

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Respectfully submitted,

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Attachments: Replacement sheet (FIGS. 1, 2 & 3).